DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Venu Vadhyar, you refer to the fact that no member of the Gowda Saraswat community has been nominated a member of this Assembly. These things have to go by rotation and small communities have to take their turn one after another with others. It does not necessarily mean that the community is ignored or has been forgotten, but it is merely waiting its time. When the time comes, a representative will take his place in the representative bodies of the State.

For the rest, with regard to the need of your community for place and position in the official scheme of things, all that I need say is that the Government will always hold out a helping hand to the helpless and the friendless. Once they have got on to their feet, they will have to fight the battle of life themselves.

187. Ezhavas and the Public Service.

MR. K. P. MARTANDAN VAIDYAN (*Member, Chirayinkil taluk, Group II*) pointed out that the Ezhavas numbered nearly seven lakhs and were occupying a foremost position in agriculture, trade and industries. Their contribution to the exchequer under land revenue, income tax and customs was also considerable. They were, however, inadequately represented in the public service; and though qualified Ezhavas fit to hold the highest offices in the State were not wanting, they had yet secured nothing better than an appointment or two in some of the departments.

Appointments in the Palace, the Military Department, the Nityachilavu, the Panivakai, the Stables, etc., were the monopoly of the caste Hindus, to whom were also confined the perquisites of the *Murajapam*, *Arat*, *Tiramadampu* and other festivals. The Ezhavas too were Hindus and had a right to claim the privileges.

The welfare of the State could be based only on an even distribution of privileges and his plea was that a steady policy should be followed to remove the present inadequate representation of Ezhavas in service. The orders of Government that preferential treatment should be given to the backward communities were not being strictly carried out by Heads of Departments. Four Ezhava clerks, who had been acting in the Account Office, were recently disbanded, but for obvious reasons one or two of them were re-entertained subsequently. Though years had lapsed since the Revenue-Devaswom separation and there was no paucity of qualified Ezhavas, they had not succeeded in getting adequate recognition even in the lower ranks of the Revenue Department.

Ezhavas were hereditary *vaidyans*, and the Ayurveda College had a large number of Ezhava students; yet only 16 out of 113 grant-in-aid *vaidyasalas* were manned by Ezhavas and they were mostly in the last grade. There was no Ezhava on the staff of any of the departmental institutions such as the College, the Pharmacy, the Hospital or the Director's office. The existing Director was not competent for the post and could be better provided in the Education Department. There were Travancoreans versed in western and eastern systems of medicine and one such belonged to his community. He considered a change in the Directorship indispensable for the progress of Ayurveda.

The Excise Department might be reserved for the Ezhavas, with equal reason when the Devaswom and the Military Departments were treated as the close preserves of some other communities. The Excise Commissioner had admittedly offered some encouragement to the Ezhavas, though he had not appointed as Sub-Inspector the Ezhava candidate recommended by the Government during the previous Dewan's time.

While grateful for the appointment of an Ezhava as Division Assistant, the member observed that the transfer had removed the only Ezhava Munsiff in the Judicial Department. There were several eligible vakils; but if the principle of communal representation followed by the High Court were accepted, it would be three decades before another Ezhava was appointed as Munsiff. Recruitment to Munsiffs' places being also made from the ministerial staff of the High Court, the importance of appointing Ezhava graduates as clerks in the High Court could not be exaggerated. Among the Sirkar Vakils, there were no Ezhavas.

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In the Anchal Department, there should be still freer recruitment of Ezhavas as Anchal Masters, clerks, etc. The Registrar of Co-operative Societies was exhibiting objectionable indifference to the claims of Ezhavas and the matter required intervention by Government. The member hoped that the new Director of Registration would satisfy the legitimate claims of Ezhavas as far as his department was concerned.

The Inspector of Vernacular Schools had appointed a number of Ezhavas as teachers. The Inspector of English Schools had not, however, thought fit to give employment to the large number of Ezhava applicants, who were graduates in Arts or had passed the Oriental Titles Examinations of the University of Madras or held diplomas awarded by the local Sanskrit College.

In the Forest Department, the member did not want that Ezhavas should be entertained straightway as Rangers and Deputy Rangers, but wished that more Ezhavas should be recruited to the clerical staff.

In conclusion, the member prayed that Ezhavas and other backward communities might, for some time to come, be exempted from the operation of the rule regarding age bar, in consideration of the fact that qualified men were becoming available only latterly and that Heads of Departments were prone to use it as a weapon against the Ezhava aspirant for office.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Martandan Vaidyan, I was full of joyous anticipations when you commenced your speech with the tone of pride in the fact that your community contains men who take good position in trade and industry. Then we listened ; and you plunged into the question of appointments. I do not think you included Devaswom and *Matilakam* but you included every other kind of official and semi-official appointments in which Ezhavas have not been holding a place ; and also you specified a number of high appointments which you would like to see filled by Ezhavas. I have not the slightest doubt that in the fulness of time Ezhavas will come to occupy those high positions. It may not be in your time, it may not be in my time. But some day, I have not the slightest doubt, they will attain fulfilment of their aspirations.

There is one thing, however, in which I am very much in sympathy with you. The Ezhavas have, as a community, been closely associated with the practice of indigenous methods of medicine and I shall take the earliest opportunity to converse with the Director of Ayurveda on the possibility of extending special encouragement to Ezhavas in that particular direction.

Your speech, like many other speeches in this Assembly—I cannot but take this opportunity of mentioning it—recalls to my mind very strikingly a refrain which I heard in a song sung by a well known musician "Harmonium Sankunni Nair" of Alleppey. It was a very pretty song. It told of various countries, places, personages such as Aurangazeb, Akbar, Tippu and other people but each verse wound up with the haunting refrain "നമ്മുടെ നാട്"*. It was a very alluring refrain. The speeches here too in many cases have a refrain ; but the refrain alas ! is not "നമ്മുടെ നാട്" but "എന്റെ സമുദായം" §. Next year, I should like to see you all coming with "നമ്മുടെ നാട്" instead of "എന്റെ സമുദായം".

188. Defects in the Distribution of Official Patronage.

MR. K. N. MADHAVA KARTA (*Member, Shertallai taluk, Group II*) pleaded that the appointments in the Judicial Department should not be made purely on the basis of communal representation, although he had no objection to the principle being adopted in respect of other departments. Officers selected for the Judicial Department should be scrupulously honest, broad-minded and kind to the people. The member quoted two instances, one relating to a Magistrate and another relating to a District Judge, where the decisions were prejudiced because the defendants in the cases happened to be members of the communities to which the deciding officers belonged. The complainant and the plaintiff in those cases had therefore to go to the High Court to have their grievances redressed. He then proceeded to narrate the circumstances of the case.

*Our country. §My community.

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